

NEWS

Appointment to view:
coming soon to your TV...

DOCUMENTARY



*Renaissance
rambler*

Kevin McCloud is to leave the property slump behind and tour Europe, following in the footsteps of the aristocrats of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

Kevin's Grand Tour – filming now for broadcast on C4 late this year – sees the *Grand Designs* host travel from Paris to Istanbul, taking in the art and architecture of Renaissance Europe as he traces the route of the Grand Tour, a historical rite of passage for the upper classes.



DRAMA

Back on the beat

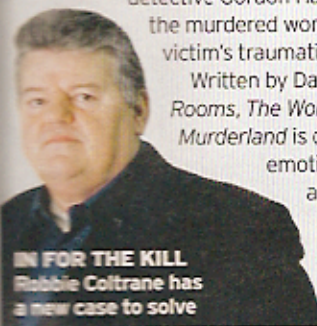
Robbie Coltrane is to return to TV crime drama for the first time since the last one-off episode of *Cracker* in 2006. *Murderland*, a new three-parter for ITV1, tells the story of a murder through the eyes of a different character each week:

detective Gordon Hain (Coltrane), the murdered woman, and the victim's traumatised daughter.

Written by David Pirie (*Murder Rooms*, *The Woman in White*), *Murderland* is described as an emotional thriller

about redemption and revenge.

Filming is due to start in June.



IN FOR THE KILL
Robbie Coltrane has a new case to solve

ALSO... **Lucy Davis** (*The Office*) will return to British TV in *Married, Single, Other* – a comedy drama for ITV1 from the executive producer of *Cold Feet*. Ralf Little co-stars. ● Filming has started on BBC's new version of Jane Austen's *Emma*. **Romola Garai** (*I Capture the Castle*) stars, along with Michael Gambon, Tamsin Greig, Robert Bathurst and Jonny Lee Miller.

POINT OF VIEW BY MIRANDA SAWYER IAN HISLOP
MICHAEL PARKINSON **SHAZIA MIRZA** TOM LOXLEY
MARIELLA FROSTRUP ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG
DAVID QUANTICK RORY BREMNER SANDI TOKSVIG

“My top tip for doing well on a panel show? Pretend you're a bloke”

BEING ON A comedy panel show is like your first kiss – it seems exciting at the time but afterwards you're sure you got it all wrong. And if you're a rising comedian the main vehicle for getting on TV is a panel show.

Who'd want to go on one, though? I've friends who've been on *Mock the Week* who say, “Never again!” You have to fight, shout, be rude, arrogant and cocky to get a word in. It's a male-dominated arena. Some women do well. Gina Yashere is great on it, but then there's nothing like a funny, brash, black woman to make white, slightly repressed, middle-class Oxbridge boys nervous. They wouldn't dare interrupt.

There are complaints from people who say “why don't we see more women on these shows?” or, “the ones that do go on are just not funny”. Well, a lot of female comics don't want to go on, some go on and never get asked back, some just never get asked. They find other places to shine, like on their own sitcom, or in a sketch show where they don't have to be so aggressive and where their confidence is not destroyed by back-stage and on-stage competitiveness.

Some panel shows use a tried and tested formula: Funny Men + Totty = Hilarious Comedy. While the men are being funny, the women can be sexy, cute and flirtatious. Why on

earth would they need funny women on there as well? *Big Fat Quiz of the Year* has had Denise Van Outen, Claudia Winkleman, Lily Allen, Cat Deeley and Trisha Goddard! Their partners were all male comics. Why can't we have a panel show based on Funny Women + Pretty Men? I'd clamour to get on that one, drooling over Dermot O'Leary or Steve Jones.

THE MOST DESIRABLE show for comics to be on is *Have I Got News For You*. I went on in November 2001, when I'd only been doing stand-up for a year. I thought it would be like appearing at Stringfellows – one woman being stared at by many men. But armed with a couple of gags and a burkha, on I went.

Paul Merton's guest was Boris Johnson – who was funnier, prettier, and better dressed than me. I was on Ian Hislop's team. He was lovely – it's hard not to like a man when he looks like your favourite teddy bear. But I was so nervous on air I kept banging my leg against the table underneath. After hitting Ian a few times, I bet he thought, “This woman's a bit forward.” Sorry Ian, it was just nerves.

Thankfully, I did OK. Angus Deayton asked me some questions, so I could be funny, and though we lost, I didn't feel too bad as I'd heard before going on the show that Ian's team never wins!

My top tip for doing well on a panel show? Pretend you're a bloke on a building site, scream, swear, get friendly with the edit man and go well armed with one-liners to fire at anyone who gets in your way.

Alternatively, grow a penis, drink a pint of testosterone and shout like you've just seen your tax bill.

“I'd love to be on a show drooling over Dermot O'Leary or Steve Jones”

